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ABSTRACT

The influence of paternalism upon a community's school district participation is discussed in this historical case study. Interviews and historical research explore the impact of the "welfare capitalism" of the Endicott Shoe Corporation and International Business Machines on Harrison City, New York, from 1890 through the present. An analysis of the history of recurring community deference to paternalistic leadership in Harrison City indicates the power and ability of this leadership model to satisfy community needs in the educational and economic systems. Just as characteristics of paternalistic leadership varied with each leader, community deference or resistance to paternalism fluctuated with changes in social, political, economic, and emotional community structures. Findings of the study document patterns of active community resistance. Community deference accorded to paternalistic leadership depended upon the degree to which the leader was able to successfully transform a work or educational ideology into a positive community ethos. The complexities of this reciprocal relationship contribute to either public deference and loyalty or public resistance and possible usurpation of the paternalistic leader. (10 references) (LMI)

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THE EFFECTS OF PATERNALISM
UPON
AN INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITY'S PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOLING

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This paper discusses the influence of paternalism upon a community's participation in its local school district. It examines the significant impact that the "welfare capitalism" of the Endicott Johnson Shoe Corporation under the benevolent, paternalistic leadership of George F. Johnson had upon the life of the community of Harrison City, New York, from 1890 through the present. It will also review the paternalistic business orientation of Thomas J. Watson, Sr. of International Business Machines, headquartered in the neighboring town of Murrill, New York, and also a source of employment for Harrison City residents.

The paper will then document the lasting effects of these models of paternalism upon the community and the local school system during the post World War II period. It will also investigate those instances in the history of the community's life when community residents were able to transcend this longstanding pattern of paternalistic dominance as well as those periods in which they reverted to a public pattern of deference to paternalistic leadership.

THE ENDICOTT-JOHNSON CORPORATION

The origins of paternalism began in Harrison City in 1888, when G. Harry Lester, owner of the Lester Shoe and Boot Co., of Binghamton, New York, laid plans for a new shoe factory two miles west of Binghamton at the suggestion of his foreman, George F.

Johnson, who had begun his apprenticeship in the shoe business almost twenty years earlier at age 13. Lester hoped to build a model community for the factory, "where a modest population of workers could live in a community controlled by a well respected capitalist who was determined to provide the benefits and guidance of a middle class life to his operatives."¹

After an auspicious beginning, Lester's interests in the shoe business soon waned. This led to the purchase of the firm by Henry Endicott in 1892, who upon Lester's urging, retained Johnson as manager.

Through the introduction of a piece work system to increase worker productivity; the elimination of middle men wherever possible in the management of the organization; an aggressive sales program directed at the retailer, which eliminated the wholesalers or middle men in sales; and the installation of a vertical operation which produced all aspects of the manufacture of the shoe from the green hide to the box in which the shoes were packaged; Johnson was able to bring renewed prosperity to the firm. New factories were built in Harrison City and the neighboring model town, Marrimott, attracting as laborers, Italian, Hungarian, Austrian, and Russian immigrants as well as native Americans.

Starting in 1894, George F. Johnson began investing his own money in the shoe concern and in 1899, bought a half interest in

¹. Gerald Zahavi, Workers, Managers, and Welfare Capitalism: The Shoeworkers and Tanners of Endicott Johnson, 1880-1950. (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 1983), 63.

the company with money loaned to him by owner Endicott whose subsequent death in 1920 granted complete control to Johnson.

In his journey through the ranks of the shoe business from laborer to foreman to investor to owner, Johnson believed that the laborer was of key importance to the firm and that the laborer's happiness in his community and in his relationship to the company was beneficial to both management and labor. To create and weld a partnership between labor and management, Johnson began in the late 1890s to be active in all the public enterprises of the village and to donate generously to every project which was of benefit to the village such as community charities and services such as fire, police, public works, and recreation.²

The first two decades of the twentieth century heaped financial success upon the shoe concern and spurred the rapid expansion of manufacturing capacity through an extensive factory building program in both Harrison City and Marriott and a continuous rise in employment figures. This prosperity in addition to Johnson's belief that the interests of labor and capital were inextricably intertwined spawned Johnson's creation of his "Square Deal" policy for his employees. Explained in a small pamphlet, the "square deal" consisted of management's offer of good wages and benefits to the worker; and in "fair return"

². Ibid., 94.

for these, the worker would make "an honest effort to do the work well," and would do "a fair and sufficient amount of it." ³

By the early 1920s, Endicott Johnson benefits to the worker and his/her immediate family included full medical and dental care, free legal services, a profit sharing plan, flexible time and consideration of the child care responsibilities of female workers, access to company stores with wholesale prices for commodities, cafeterias where lunches were sold at reduced prices, the opportunity to buy a company built home at the low mortgage rate of two to three percent interest on principal. Johnson's generosity also continued to extend to the community via the construction of sports facilities, playgrounds, swimming pools, a golf course, free carrouseles, fire service, gifts to every new born child, and holiday gifts to all including those in the community jails.⁴

As extensively documented in the works of Saul and Zahavi, Johnson worked diligently to cultivate his worker's love for him and his loyalty to him. He wanted his worker to view the company as his extended family and Johnson as the benevolent father. His "square deal" policies and benefits, his efforts through innumerable company publications and newspaper articles to portray the metaphor of family to characterize the mutual relationship between the management and the workers of Endicott

³. Ibid., 136.

⁴. Richard S. Saul, An American Entrepreneur. (Ph.D. diss., Syracuse University, 1967).

Johnson, and his accessibility to his workers via his always open office door and his tours of their particular factories and their neighborhoods all contributed to this. Johnson's corporate welfarism and sincere rhetoric turned ideology symbolized for the local community a capitalist's paternalistic embrace of labor which wrapped his workers, their families, their lives, and their communities in tangible services, job stability, personal security, and a sense of harmony between home and workplace. The embrace, however, did entail reciprocal affection from the worker: Johnson wanted an honest day's work from his worker, plus he wanted labor loyalty and harmony which meant worker resistance to repeated efforts by labor associations to unionize his corporation.⁵

In his investigation of this web of industrial paternalism which wove round and round the EJ workers, Zahavi argues, however, that the Endicott Johnson workers were "never captive to paternalism," but were able to exact concessions and considerations from Johnson and his family in their management of the firm, especially during financially difficult times e.g., during the Depression when the firm resisted wage and benefit reductions and layoffs. He maintains that Johnson responded time and again to the individual appeals of workers and their hardships and was nudged by workers' requests for better wages

⁵. See Zahavi's extensive documentation of the history of mutual relationship of Endicott Johnson and it workers.

and benefits as he found himself caught in the rhetoric of his partnership ideology of labor and capital.⁶

The mutual dependencies which such industrial paternalism and worker allegiance wrought extended into the second generation of the Johnsons who managed the firm in the late forties and fifties. When the threats of local walkouts resurfaced in 1947, Johnson's nephew and son dusted off the "square deal" policies of decades past by building worker homes and recreational centers, developing a formal pension plan and an employee bonus plan.⁷

Threatened by cheaper foreign imports, consumer demand for lighter, more stylish shoes, aging plants, and increasing state taxes during the 1950s, Endicott Johnson began to retreat from its benevolent community practices and support by relocating some of its operations to places where labor was cheaper. Thus, began the erosion of the proclaimed partnership of labor and capital. With each successive year, financial crises grew within the firm. Poor management decisions hastened its decline in the 1960s until the firm was sold to outside investors in 1969. This occurred, in spite of an earlier rescue of the firm in 1961 by the community when all members of the community, merchants, workers, Boy Scouts valiantly purchased company stock to thwart the purchase of the company by an outside firm. The once giant of a corporation now maintains a severely diminished presence in the valley of Harrison City and Marrimott employing just over 1,000

⁶. Zahavi, 248-285.

⁷. Ibid., 420.

workers in marked contrast to the 17,000 workers it had employed in 1941.

THE MEN OF IBM

As the Endicott Johnson Corporation was reaching its nadir in the early decades of the twentieth century, another company was struggling to prominence in the village of Mairimott, a company whose name would achieve world recognition by the 1950s. Organized as a holding company of several, diversely located companies in the computing scales and time recording business in 1914, the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company (CTR) was commanded by Thomas J. Watson, Sr.⁸ In 1924 Watson replaced the company's name with the title of International Business Machines, a telling example of his intention that the company should become dominant in the world market for automated office equipment. By 1955, the last full year of Watson's reign in the presidency of the company, IBM's earnings had reached \$696,294,000; 170 times the monetary base from which CTR had started in 1914.⁹ By 1969, IBM had become the largest nonunion company in the world with installations in 105 countries.¹⁰

⁸. Thomas Belden and Marva Belden, The Lengthening Shadow: The Life of Thomas J. Watson (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1962), 173.

⁹. William Rodgers, Think: A Biography of the Watsons and IBM, (New York: Stein and Day, 1969), 217.

¹⁰. Ibid., 9.

As president, Watson boldly stamped his personal style and beliefs upon the company. Through company sales retreats, publications, songs and slogans, Watson created the "IBM Man."

The IBM man, whether employed as an executive or a machine repairman, was expected by Watson to be an impeccably groomed man with white collar, striped tie, and blue suit, a man who pursued sales of tabulating machines through creative, thoughtful attention to the needs of his customers. He was urged to "think," to fulfill his sales quotas, to shun alcohol, to educate his customers as to his needs, to be loyal to the ways of IBM whose success depended on his success. For this he was rewarded with extravagant sales retreats, financial bonuses, extensive benefit packages for his family and himself, memberships to the exclusive IBM country clubs, and with remittances for the continued education of himself and his family.

In such a manner did a second brand of corporate paternalism influence the people of the Susquehanna Valley including Harrison City. EJ and IBM; George F. Johnson and Thomas J. Watson. The symbolism and the myth created by the individual actions of each corporate magnate dominated the lives of the residents of these communities throughout the decades of the twentieth century. United in their spiritual, almost religious commitment to the goals of their corporations, Johnson and Watson both bestowed upon their employees benefits and services unusual for the time. Similarly, both men expected absolute loyalty from their

employees and the pledge that no union would ever invade their workplaces.¹¹

The major difference between the two corporations lay in the social and occupational status of their employees: IBMers were viewed as white collar workers, members of the affluent middle class encouraged through the practices of Watson to seek further education and to socially exclude themselves from other community members. EJers were blue collar factory workers who were told by Johnson to forget any education beyond high school for the "best school" for shoeworkers was "work in the shoe factory."¹² Watson promoted a social elitism for his employees whereas Johnson criticized the ways of rich and sought to extend those exclusive privileges associated with the wealthy to the working classes e.g., his building of a public golf course for his employees since golf was viewed publicly as the "rich man's game."¹³ Also, Johnson's generosity extended to all members of the community whether they were workers of Endicott Johnson or not; his parks, recreational centers, banquets, carrousels, etc., were open and free to all. As recollected by one resident of Harrison City, "IBM did for IBM; EJ did for everyone."¹⁴

¹¹. Saul documents the personal communications between the men and Johnson's influence upon Watson, 136.

¹². "Old George F. and Colleges," Press and Sun-Bulletin, 7 July 1967.

¹³. Press & Sun-Bulletin, 9 November 1987.

¹⁴. S-5, interview with author, Harrison City, 22 July 1987. All interviews have been coded or use pseudonyms to provide anonymity.

THE COMMUNITY AND SCHOOLS OF HARRISON CITY

In the 1960s Harrison City remained a small urban community dominated by the shoe industry as the Endicott Johnson Corporation struggled to survive. Almost half of the men in the community were employed in manufacturing of some kind, and more than likely shoe manufacturing; it was the chief occupation of those women employed as well.¹⁵

The average educational attainment level of the 1960 Harrison City resident stopped short of high school graduation. George F. Johnson's disdain for postsecondary education and his factories' recruitment of young labor caused many families to eschew the value of education beyond high school for its children. The Harrison City schools were known as "greaser" schools to surrounding communities, a place where a basic education could be gotten but little beyond.¹⁶

An out-migration of college educated youth and young families from Harrison City in the 1960s to either unknown locations or to the sprouting suburbs surrounding the town of Marrimott were signs of youthful dissatisfaction with life in the

¹⁵. United States, Bureau of the Census, "U.S.Census of Population and Housing: 1960," (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961).

¹⁶. S-2, interview with the author, Harrison City, 22 August 1988.

shoetown.¹⁷ Both World War II and the Korean War caused many young Harrison City men and women to leave the area for the first time. It also provided alluring glimpses of possibilities of life beyond the blue collar town and guaranteed the veteran GI educational benefits. Many of these second generation Americans, whose siblings had entered the employ of Endicott Johnson after high school, were now able to pursue college and professional occupations, opportunities which their parents traditionally could not afford nor did not encourage. Family loyalty to George F. Johnson and his beliefs as well as the security and benefits associated with a job at Endicott Johnson had previously kept many a high school graduate from even entertaining the thought of college. Military service and the GI Bill gave these veterans the opportunity to dream beyond the shoe factories and permission to be something other than an "EJ" worker. Those who did return to live in Harrison City to be near their families did not seek low paying jobs in the hot, poorly ventilated factories of EJ; instead they sought entry level positions at IBM and other high technology firms which were attracted to the area via the presence of IBM. As a result, a small population of middle class, white collar workers grew in Harrison City.

The "emergence of a newly formed middle class of professional and service workers with an increased amount of leisure time" led to active participation in community politics

¹⁷. Village of Harrison City Comprehensive Development Plan, Broome County, New York, 1967, P3. A copy of the plan is available in the Broome County Planning Office.

by residents whose foreign born parents had never become involved in political issues.¹⁸ Prior to 1960, the Johnson family had informally controlled the political structures of the community through its large subsidy of community services including schooling, the allegiance of family friends, and the workers' deference to Johnson's paternalism.¹⁹ The decline of the shoe industry during the 1960s loosened this invisible grip on the population of Harrison City and provided a widening crack for the new ideas and goals of the middle class to permeate the town.

The major political issue in Harrison City became school politics as it had in the rural community of Springdale researched by Vidich and Bensman:

The new middle class lives with the school issue through the lives of its children and this is a process that commands their attention on a daily and weekly basis....When presented with an issue...of education...that affects its children, the middle class responds not in terms of higher moral values but in terms of self-interest.²⁰

The first such school issue to grasp the attention of Harrison City residents was the centralization of the school district of the town of Harrison City and the nine small, surrounding districts which maintained their own elementary schools but fed into the Harrison City high school. Although

¹⁸. Arthur J. Vidich and Joseph Bensman, Small Town in Mass Society (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), 319.

¹⁹. S-3, interview with author, Harrison City, 22 August 1988.

²⁰. Small Town, 332.

encouraged to centralize by the state education department, residents resisted these early consolidation efforts. They continued to hope for a brighter future until the 1961 when during the outside attempt to buy the firm, the new management had warned that if successful in the buyout, they would seek reduced assessments of Endicott Johnson property in the community. This omen and the dwindling labor force of EJ to 6,000 workers in the mid 1960s from almost 18,000 during the Korean War caused residents of the town and surrounding areas to realize gradually the paternalistic subsidies of EJ were gone forever.²¹

After defeating a board sponsored referendum on centralization in 1962, community residents came back in 1964 to approve centralization of the ten districts overwhelming with over two "yes" votes for every "no." A local newspaper article quoting school board members called

"the outcome...the first step in...a bright future for the Harrison City area," demonstrates that "Harrison City is not really a dying town....It will be shown to non-believers that we can give our children a better educational system."²²

The fighting spirit which had united the community in its defeat of the 1961 takeover attempt by local stock purchases resurfaced in this community determination to not only support the schools as Endicott Johnson had once done, but to build a better system for its children. Fully aware that the aging

²¹. Harrison City Plan, 1967, EB6.

²². Binghamton Sun-Bulletin, 21 May 1964.

father, EJ, now depended on its resources and energy, the community of Harrison City began to announce its adulthood.

A second declaration of community residents who intended to determine their own affairs outside of the influence of EJ occurred in the election of the seven members to the school board of the newly formed district. A nominating committee comprised of school board members of the old district placed seven nominations before the public: three representatives from the outlying areas and four from the town of Harrison City, three of which were incumbents from the prior board. These three plus the fourth new nomination from Harrison City comprised what had hitherto been the elite of Harrison City: doctors employed at the Endicott Johnson subsidized Wilson Memorial Hospital, a lawyer's wife and member of the church which the Johnsons attended and a well known Protestant minister. These members and the superintendent of the Harrison City Schools, who was choir director of the Methodist church Johnson attended, were part of the visible power structure in the community backed by the Johnson family. The superintendent and board members often met with "Mr. Charlie" (George Johnson's nephew and president of the company until the late 1950s) at a local restaurant for coffee to discuss school and community matters.²³

At the special district meeting for the board elections, an astonished group of board nominees met a forceful group of seven challengers, four of whom had campaigned vociferously throughout

²³. S-3, interview with author, 22 August 1988.

the community on a platform of freeing the district from the hands of a "dictatorial" superintendent and "bringing in new ideas in a district that needed modernization."²⁴ Feeling that the present board with their "prestigious positions" did not "represent the average individual," the new challengers voiced their support of a new high school for the community, and that the process of building of the school should be "sensitive to community needs" and open to "community input."²⁵ A front page headline announced the results of the hotly contested election:

Mrs. Bellew Loses...Board Seat....a group of young insurgents swept four seats on the new board....The insurgents appeared to have control of the 1,205 people voting as they defeated three veteran board members.²⁶

All four of the "young insurgents" were the sons of Endicott Johnson workers, three of whom were second generation ethnic Catholics and had postsecondary education. Triumphantlly, they promised the community a new era of education for their children which would outfit them for occupations other than in the red brick factories of EJ.

The first major accomplishment of the new board was the commissioning of a study of the secondary programs of the district by Syracuse University which would be used to guide the building of the new high school. In the tradition of a former generation of education scientists including Strayer, Ayres, and

²⁴. B-2, interview with author, 2 December 1988.

²⁵. B-8, interview with author, 8 November 1988.

²⁶. Binghamton Sun-Bulletin, 17 June 1964.

West,²⁷ the team of experts from the university endorsed the superintendent and board's call for a new high school, recommended a thorough articulation of the secondary curriculum, proposed a pyramidal organizational chart with numerous middle managers to introduce needed coordination and communication between departments and the administration, and saved its most directed criticisms for the autocratic administration of the superintendent and the relationship between the school board and superintendent. Echoing similar conclusions of innumerable surveys done throughout the country by members of the "educational trust" during the twentieth century, the survey advised clearly defined policies for the organization of the school by the administration and a clearly defined policy role for the board which discouraged board meddling into the everyday affairs of the school. The report also confirmed community and school staff's concerns that they had little or no input into the school decision making process.²⁸

Armed with a survey describing the antiquated educational system of the district, the superintendent and school board initiated the building program for the new high school. However, the contentious relationship between the superintendent and board did not abate, but became further exacerbated until Spring 1968,

²⁷. David Tyack and Elisabeth Hansot, Managers of Virtue: Public School Leadership in America, 1820-1980 (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1982), 160-166.

²⁸. Samuel Goldman, The Report of a Survey of the Johnson City Central School District (Syracuse, N.Y.: Bureau of School Service, School of Education, Syracuse University, 1966).

when the board surprised the community and staff with the announcement of the resignation of the superintendent, two years short of his retirement and just months before the breaking of the ground for the new school, which had been a personal goal and dream of the superintendent.

The shock of this resignation came on the heels of another closed decision by the board to fire the football coach in December, 1967. The firing of a "winning" football coach was incomprehensible and outrageous to a community which avidly followed the activities of the local sports teams. Rumors abounded in the school and community regarding the two decisions and led to one newspaper dubbing the board, the "stupid seven."²⁹ Refusing to discuss publicly its reasons for the firings, the board rejected appeals for public meetings and in its decision to fire the superintendent, referred a flabbergasted public and school staff to ten copies of the Syracuse survey which they recently had placed in the public library. The school board members who had run on a platform of community input to schools had slammed the doors on the public's accessibility to the schools. The promise of 1964's brief springtime of participatory democracy in Harrison City was over; the group of "young insurgents" had reverted to the well-established pattern of paternalistic control of public decision making.

Enlisting the aid of Syracuse University's administrative placement service, the board quickly hired the services of a new,

²⁹. Binghamton Sun-Bulletin, 9 January 1968.

well liked superintendent who deftly guided the building and dedication of the new high school in 1970. After two years, he was lured to the employment of the local cooperative educational agency and replaced with an interim superintendent.

Again hiring the services of Syracuse University's placement service, the Harrison City 1970-71 school board with the aid of an faculty observation team hired a new superintendent, James Cabot, "a city man with slick hair," who arrived with a clear vision of reform for the children of Harrison City.³⁰ Five of the seven men on the school board were "IBMers;" and were the majority opinion on a board which wanted a superintendent with "cosmopolitan" ideas who would turn their "greaser" schools into a "lighthouse" district.³¹ The new superintendent's forceful, charismatic rhetoric spoke of an education based on "research and innovation and responsive to the needs of children;"³² a rhetoric overflowing with technical educational terms such as "rate of learning and achievement as a function of time on task."³³ An education based on research and one which could be scientifically tuned to help all children learn melodically plucked the mind strings of this group of technicians and engineers, who via IBM

³⁰. B-4, interview with author, 20 July, 1987.

³¹. James Cabot, interview with author, 6 May 1988.

³². Evening Press, 24 May 1971.

³³. The new superintendent in a chronology of "critical incidents" in the curriculum reform of Harrison City acknowledged Benjamin Bloom's research on mastery learning.

had built a middle class orientation to life which included aspirations of an achievement directed education for their children.

Within one year Cabot had initiated his "open structured" curriculum reforms which emphasized individualized instruction within one small "incubator" elementary school,³⁴ had crafted an accompanying facilities redesign plan based upon the recommendations of parent advisory councils he had appointed, and received board approval for a total reorganization of his administrative support staff. Reminiscent of Johnson's approach to management in the late 1890s, Cabot eliminated eight middle management positions within the district and consolidated their tasks into a newly created position of an assistant superintendent for instruction, for which he recommended that the board hire someone with whom he had worked in the downstate district. Like Johnson who had implemented a piece work system in the factory which underscored individual accountability, Cabot devised individual performance plans for each of his administrators and later for each of the district's teachers, which were the basis of their yearly evaluations and in the case of the administrators, their merit raises.

Characterized by one interviewee as "a town that was fifty years behind the times and liked it that way,"³⁵ Harrison City had

³⁴. School board minutes, 25 May 1971.

³⁵. S-1, interview with author, 22 July, 1987.

just completed a decade which had been filled with tremendous change: the decline of Endicott Johnson, a gradual transition in employment to high technology, the construction of a major highway in its midst which had dissected the community vertically and horizontally and had destroyed 850 homes,³⁶ the development of a shopping mall, the opening of a new high school, and within the town and school governments, the election of second and third generation Endicott Johnson workers. Many of these changes had been foisted upon the residents of the community; others they had sought and supported. The schools represented an arena for change which they as residents felt they could control and where their underlying, traditional, change-resistant values surfaced when confronted with the aggressive, ambitious curriculum reforms of the new superintendent. Cabot's personal leadership style with the public also did nothing to sooth the nerves of community residents struggling with a new collective identity which was no longer based on shoes. Public comments attributed to Cabot included calling the residents, "a bunch of peasants;" and the community, "a community in misery, a community with sixpack tastes."³⁷

Community response was to "open fire" upon the programs of Cabot and upon Cabot himself.³⁸ In Cabot's eleven year history with the district, community residents tried again and again to

³⁶. James Cabot, interview with author, 6 May 1988.

³⁷. C-2, interview with author, 21 July 1987.

³⁸. Sun-Bulletin, 10 May 1972.

wrestle control of the school district from him. Their methods included petitions against his programs, petitions which demanded his resignation, a petition opposing his and the board's decision to eliminate eighteen teaching positions in a "shootout" with the teachers' union,³⁹ a student walkout, the defeat of five school board incumbents associated with his programs, and the defeat of five annual budget referenda and several accompanying budget propositions.

Cabot's charisma, his fierce adherence to the ideology that "all children could learn," and his highly organized management style convinced (or as put by some, "intimidated")⁴⁰ the members of the school boards of the Harrison City schools in the years 1971 through 1978 to support his reforms which spread through the system, K-12, and gradually coalesced into an instructional program based on mastery learning. Although many of these board members ran for office on an anti-Cabot platform, as a board they were never able to "take him on" successfully.⁴¹

These sons of EJ workers, these newly arrived IBM employees were each strong men as individuals, but had been raised in blue collar, ethnic families among whom some had worshiped the benevolent patriarch, George F. Johnson, while others begrudgingly, but obediently labored on the shoe factory floors comforted by the secure life it afforded their families. Their

³⁹. Cabot, interview with author, 6 May 1988.

⁴⁰. S-2, interview with author, 22 July 1987.

⁴¹. S-1, interview with author, 22 July 1987.

parents had not been involved in the schools; their families had always publicly expressed deference to those in authority. None of those who opposed Cabot had run as a group for school board as had the earlier group of "young insurgents." Each newly elected board member entered a group which Cabot had effectively "renormed" to his "vision" and goals.⁴² Also as IBM employees, they were used to a chain of command and strong top leadership. As a management team, they were interested in improving the schools, but looked to Cabot to lead the way. His administrative style made sense to these corporate novitiates; his strong, autocratic, domineering leadership was characteristic of the strong male decision maker and role model of their traditional, ethnic families.

Thus, in spite of community residents' efforts to get rid of him, Cabot was able to implement his vision into the Harrison City schools. Within this seven year period, he nurtured "stars" within his administrative and teaching staff who believed in his vision, gradually forced the resignation or retirement of those who did not, and hired new adherents to his developing ideology.⁴³

Then in Spring 1978, another anti-Cabot community resident was elected to the school board; he, too, had been the child of "EJers," of Polish immigrants, a man who had left Harrison City and upon his return, went to work for IBM. Spurning the "white

⁴². Cabot, interview with author, 6 May 1988.

⁴³. Cabot, interview with author, 6 May 1988.

collar" image of IBM, he did something rather unusual for a newly arrived "IBMer"; he quit his job and became a consumer advocate and labor representative for the county. A self described "bully," Ruzinski "took Cabot on" and attracted to the board others who disliked Cabot's attitudes toward the community.⁴⁴ With the election of Ruzinski, the consensus boards of Harrison City disappeared; more and more of Cabot's recommendations barely received approval as the "nay" votes increased. The new block on the board supported the mastery program of the district and its implementation throughout the system; they supported additional requirements for high school graduation, preparation courses for the Scholastic Aptitude Tests, accelerated courses for gifted students, an alternative school for students experiencing difficulty, the extension of reading skills to all areas of the curriculum; in short they supported the instructional philosophy and program of Cabot; but they would no longer tolerate what they perceived as his arrogant and disdainful attitude toward the community and his adversarial relationship with the teachers' union.

However, with the new decade, the school district began receiving national attention and praise for its exemplary instructional programs.⁴⁵ Upon board approval of his contract renewal with the highest merit raise possible, Cabot announced

⁴⁴. Richard Ruzinski, interview with author, 3 August 1989.

⁴⁵. See Anthony Brandt, "The School Where Everyone Get's A's," Family Circle, 17 March 1981.

his voluntary retirement from the superintendency in April 1982. Immediately after this announcement, the board voted to replace Cabot with the district's assistant superintendent who had worked under Cabot's wings for the past ten years.

Under the leadership of the new superintendent, Bruce Najiri, the district has continued to be recognized nationally for its academic excellence.⁴⁶ With Najiri in place as superintendent and Ruzinski on the school board, the community again shows signs of deferring to the paternalistic leadership of both men in a manner which is akin to that observed during George F. Johnson's control of the shoe concern.

Now serving his third five year term on the school board, Ruzinski humorously and articulately dominates the verbal interactions of school board members during meetings and actively participates in all school activities, conferences, and public meetings. He admits to recruiting new board members and has advised others to retire. When interviewed for this study, he admonished the interviewer for not coming to him first for the history of the district rather than proceeding chronologically with the interview data. An accepted, ethnic son of the community, Ruzinski serves as the gatekeeper for the community's access to the schools.

The leadership style of Najiri is open and based on a strong sense of trust and concern for every aspect of his educational

⁴⁶. See Tom R. Vickery, "Learning From an Outcomes-Driven School District," Educational Leadership 45(February 1988), 52-56.

enterprise from the student to the janitor. His accessibility to his staff is continuous, and his nurturance of their teaching abilities is constant. Contracts with the teachers' union are now negotiated directly between the board and association representatives without an outside negotiator. His openness to the public is also well documented; each year neighborhood meetings are conducted throughout the district in the homes of residents; he is on the board of the local senior citizens center; he engages the district's students in a number of projects which benefit the community and encourages their volunteering for community organizations; the activities of the district's alternative school have developed an ongoing and growing association with the community's businesses and industries. Disgruntled parents are heard; grievances are remedied. All those who were interviewed for this study consistently praised the work and leadership of Najiri.

Only one interview with a former school board member revealed the repercussions of publicly opposing and questioning the policies of the district. This board member who had served as president of the board for two years and was seeking a third term was unable to do so as the school board led by Ruzinski voted against the serving of three concurrent terms in one school board office. He was also defeated in his attempt for a second term on the board and attributed this defeat to campaigns against him which were led by the teachers' union which includes Ruzinski's wife, a teacher in the district.

With the well substantiated success of the district in raising the achievement levels of all students in the district, a success mythology is woven in the public language of the district as detailed in the curriculum model that the district disseminates throughout the country and presents in its annual conferences. The ideology of this curriculum model and its accompanying "positive ethos"⁴⁷ or success mythology is presented in a two week orientation for new teachers prior to the opening to schools and is discussed during board meetings. This public portrayal of ethos is akin to the innumerable publications produced by the Endicott Johnson Corporation regarding its "square deal" and the "Happy EJ family." Just as the success mythology attached to EJ attracted immigrants to its factories and the community of Harrison City, the growing news of the success of the district is now attracting white middle and upper class families who want to live in Harrison City because of its exemplary school district.

With Najiri's ascendancy to the position of superintendent, community participation in the political decisions of the school district has declined remarkably. Voter turnout for budget referenda is returning to the levels of the pre-centralization days of the district when the benevolent leadership of EJ guided the schools. Tax increases are easily passed for budget defeats stopped when Cabot retired. As one board member responded when asked about the board's role in the school decision making, "Why

⁴⁷. Tyack and Hansot, 255.

should we interfere? We trust Bruce."⁴⁸ Not unlike residents in other communities who are satisfied with their schools, Harrison City residents easily defer to the benevolent paternalistic and professional expertise of Najiri, reassured that they can trust him to guide the lives of their children.

In conclusion, the history of recurring community deference to paternalistic leadership in Harrison City indicates the powerful nature of this leadership model and its ability to satisfy the needs of community in the schoolhouse as well as the workplace. Johnson, Watson, "the young insurgents," Cabot, Ruzinski, and lastly Najiri were and have been successful in the accomplishment of their particular goals because of the community's responsiveness to control by a strong, male leader as first exemplified in the person of George F. Johnson.

Although this study documents this persistent thread of paternalism in the management of both industry and school, one can not ignore the complexities of the history of paternalism within Harrison City. Characteristics of the paternalistic leadership varied with each leader; likewise, community deference or resistance to paternalism varied with changes in social, political, economic, and emotional structures within the community. Consistent with Zahavi's argument that the workers of EJ were "never captive to paternalism," this study also documents events in the community's history when residents' actively resisted paternalistic leadership in spite of historical

⁴⁸. B-6, interview with author, 11 November 1986.

precedence; for example, their responses to the behaviors of the two superintendents, which led to the involuntary turnover of one superintendent and the retirement of the another. When necessary, the community could successfully strike out against forceful, unheeding paternalistic leadership.

Only when the paternalistic leadership characteristics included a nurturance of, trust for, and sensitivity to the community's needs did this constituency willingly accede to directives to which they may or may have had input, belying the complex interdependency of leader and follower. Deference to the paternalistic leadership of both Johnson and Najiri involved more than an exchange of wages and substantial benefits for one's labor or exemplary instructional programs for one's children; this deference was consciously accorded to each leader by the industrial worker or by the parent and the teacher because of each man's ability to instill a belief within their respective groups that he had their best interests at heart and that he valued each member of his organization and his community. In this manner, each man was successful in transforming a work or learning ideology into an community ethos. This transformation of ideology into a "positive ethos" eluded Cabot, who did not recognize the reciprocal nature of the leader and follower relationship. As seen in this historical case study, the complexities of this reciprocity can lead either to public deference and loyalty or to public resistance and possibly, to the ousting of the paternalistic leader.

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